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Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships to celebrate sustainability at the University of Minnesota, Morris

Summary: “Celebrating Sustainability” will feature sustainable development work conducted by community and University partners.

(July 21, 2011)-The University of Minnesota, Morris will serve as the gathering place for the [Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships](#) (RSDP) “Celebrating Sustainability” event on Tuesday, August 2, 2011. The occasion will feature RSDP place-based projects, sustainable development work conducted by community and University partners, and homegrown food and music.

Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson will provide the welcome at the evening reception. Kathy Draeger, RSDP statewide director, will also provide comments.

The celebration will include an afternoon tour highlighting the University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center’s sustainable foods and energy projects and the Morris campus’s green initiatives.

The RSDP works to sustain Minnesota’s natural resource-based communities and industries by addressing community-identified agriculture, natural resources, and tourism issues in partnership with the University. The West Central Partnership is comprised of a citizen-driven board of directors working with citizens to create and sustain healthy ecosystems, strong local economies, and vibrant, self-reliant communities. Its mission—launching education and research that help people understand and achieve sustainability in their region—supports projects that demonstrate public purpose and builds partnerships with citizens of the watershed to local assets and University research and educational resources.

“Not too many people are aware that even the wind tower at UMM began with a nudge from the West Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership,” says John Baumgartner, a current board member. “It was before my time, but we really work hard as a board to identify projects that help advance state-of-the-art projects promoting sustainability.”

The Morris campus also collaborates with the RSDP through projects such as the [Pride of the Prairie Local Foods](#) initiative, [Morris Healthy Eating](#), and [the Center for Small Towns](#) (CST), including CST Students in Service projects.

“I have been a member of the Board of Directors of the West Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership since 2006,” shares Nan Haggerty. “Although I have lived in Starbuck and practiced law in the region for 10 years, I do not have a agricultural education or background. My association with the Regional Partnerships has given me access to knowledgeable faculty, cutting edge research, and various disciplines at the University of Minnesota. These folks have astounded me again and again with the innovative ways that the University of Minnesota and local citizens work together to implement grass roots projects that sustain our scarce resources of food, water, and energy! I urge anyone who appreciates where they live to take a look at the work of the Regional Partnerships.”

To learn more, contact [Dorothy Rosemeier, RSDP's west central Minnesota executive director, at 320-760-3735.](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.